BRISTOL TOWN-HALL.

SIR,—Some time since we were given to understand here, that when the Guildhall was finished you would furnish the public with your own observations upon it, and these have been looked for with some anxiety, as they would not be influenced by partial statements. Some remarks in the *Bristol Mercury* of last Saturday, as well as the insertion of an article on the subject in *The Times*, make it desirable to many that a portion of your valuable publication should be devoted to the subject, and if some practicable mode could be suggested to obtain for us a PUBLIC HALL, it would render a service to this ancient and loyal city, and would no doubt be well received by the public. There is a space of ground at the back of the recently erected building, that could probably be obtained at a reasonable price, as the buildings on it are old and decayed.

It is a little singular that the council house now has a huge entrance and handsome staircase, but the room built at the first for a justice room, was so dark and inconvenient as now to be of no other use than a thoroughfare. They were obliged to take in, since, other ground for a justice room, where the prosecutors and the prosecuted are mingled together in disagreeable confusion when they have to appear before their worships.

Had our councillors agreed as to the accommodation requisite for themselves, and the public, who have to pay for it, and offered a premium for the best plans at a given expense, we should have had what we wanted, without wasting our money on a very dashing front without internal accommodation.

The courts of bankruptcy afford accommodation to the commissioner and the professional gentlemen, but the creditors, should the number exceed 12 or 14 at the most, have to stand in a most inconvenient passage.

I, with others, shall be very glad if you will take up this subject, and am, Sir, &c.

AN OLD CITIZEN OF BRISTOL.

Bristol, Aug. 15, 1846.

I inclose my card for your own satisfaction.

*** The subject shall not be lost sight of. The arrangement of our law courts throughout the country is very defective, and is scarcely to be reconciled with our assumed advances in knowledge. Mr. Cockburn remarked, at the opening of the Bristol courts in question, that Mr. Justice Taunton once said, in his hearing, that the great object of the ingenuity of all architects, when they are constructing courts of law, is to make them as inconvenient as possible to all parties. Surely the architects are not always to blame? Are there no other causes in operation?

RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

A bill for the appointment of the Government Railway Board, recommended by the select committee alluded to in our last impression, was brought before the Commons and read a first time on the 19th instant. The Board is to consist of a president and four members, two of them paid, one in each House of Parliament, so as to be ready to reply to all railway questions; and to these it is proposed to add the whole of the staff of the railway department of the Board of Trade.——The responsibility of railway engineers, established in the case of Collins *v.* Giles, recorded in our impression of the 8th instant, is likely to lead to extreme severity in the adjudication against defaulting engineers, or those who may be regarded as such. The precedent was immediately followed up in various instances, and one of the most important of those still further meditated, is the action about to be brought by the Great Eastern and Western Company, against Mr. Gravatt, for the recovery of money paid to him, and for full compensation for very great losses alleged to have been sustained in consequence of the defective state of their plans. Proceedings of a like nature, it is said, are to be instituted against the same gentlemen by the Worcester, Warwick, and Rugby Company, in which large sums are likewise involved.——Mr. Austin is said to have realized no less than 45,000*l.* during the present session, by his services as an advocate before the Railway Committees.——A penny subscription is in progress for behoof of "Thomas Gray, the Railway Pioneer," who has impoverished his old age by his original advocacy of the railway system.——An American, it is said, has invented a self-adjusting break, by means of which the engineer can arrest each carriage in a train simultaneously with every other, and thus prevent their mutual concussion.——The newly amalgamated "London and North Western" Company, in which, including minor lines such as the North Union and the Lancaster and Preston, there have been merged six previously independent companies, wields its iron sceptre "over something like 830 miles of territory, and holds the key of an exchequer whose money-power represents something upwards of 17,000,000*l.*; so that England," says the *Railway Times*, "from London to the north, has become placed under the untrammelled control of the cross-bars of one private body, from its inland centre, London, to Manchester and Liverpool, the great triangles of its trade."——The extension of the South-Western Railway to the vicinity of Waterloo Bridge is in active progress. A number of houses in the vicinity of Vauxhall gate have been demolished, and others in the Westminster-bridge-road are about to follow, as that thoroughfare is to be crossed by a viaduct extending diagonally from the Upper Marsh, Lambeth, to Waterloo-bridge.——A correspondent of the *Morning Herald* declares that the speed on the Croydon atmospheric line surpasses any thing he has yet experienced. With a train of four passenger-carriages a velocity of 75 miles an hour was reached, and the speed appears to have averaged, throughout the atmospheric run of five miles, a rate of about 65 miles an hour. All the trains observed, too, were perfectly regular as to time.——The exterior of the temporary station at Stamford for the Syston and Peterborough line is completed, but the opening is not yet fixed.——The sinking of the earth on the Ipswich and Bury line, at Stowmarket, has raised the adjacent fields several feet, but the contractor and engineer are still confident of filling the swamps without retarding the completion of the line.——The contract for the Whitby Railway station, we hear, has been obtained by Messrs. Bellerby and Company, of York. The cost will considerably exceed 10,000*l.*——The railway labourers on the Newcastle and Berwick line, between the Aln and the Coquet, have stood out for and obtained 4*s.* a day for their labour.

PROVINCIAL NEWS.

THE proposal to restore and repew the church of St. Lawrence, Reading, at an expense of 2,000*l.*, has called forth from Mr. Blandy, of Highgrove, communications to the local papers, in which he regrets that the restorations have been undertaken by a committee (consisting of the vicar, two churchwardens, and others), appointed merely to repew the church (at an ascertained expense of 190*l.*), and who have proceeded to select plans for restoration without specially consulting the parishioners, with whose sympathies Mr. Blandy declares that neither the committee nor their proposed restorations at all harmonize. It is the manner and special description alone, and not the general necessity of restoration, that Mr. Blandy disputes, and at all events surely the parishioners ought to be specially consulted, or rather called upon to appoint their own committee (whether the same or another) for that special purpose if they desire it. We have ourselves received communications complaining of the manner in which the competition for plans was managed.——The three new public parks at Manchester, namely, Queen's Park, Peel's Park, and Phillip's Park, were formally opened on Saturday last with great *éclat*. They have cost about 35,000*l.*, including 32,000*l.* subscribed by 5,000 persons. Three composition statues have been contributed by Mr. Armitage, of Sheffield, and placed in appropriate situations. The grounds are all well tile drained, and are all provided with fixed and moveable seats, side walks, gymnasia, archery butts, play grounds, May poles, &c., and, what are still more wanted in our own metropolitan parks, namely, drinking wells and private conveniences. They are well laid out with trees, shrubs, plants, &c., and have all been declared to belong exclusively to the working classes although the authorities have not failed to supply them all with well-appointed carriage-drives.——The interior of West Ham church is about to be repaired and beautified, at a cost of 1,500*l.*, supplied by a rate of 9*d.* per pound on the parish assessment.——The church of St. John, Stratford, is also to be altered, &c., at a cost of 250*l.*——The Wesleyans intend to supersede their Kingswood College, by the erection of a new and more extended building in the vicinity of Bath.——This respectable body appears to be thriving at Taunton also, where it has been found necessary to enlarge their chapel in Upper High Street, by the addition of 200 sittings. Schools for several hundred children too are in course of erection at the rear of the chapel. About 1,200*l.* are to be thus expended.——Mr. Marshall, of Belmont, has contributed 50*l.* to the expense of restoring the church of St. Mary, Taunton.——The new church of St. John the Baptist, at Eastover, Bridgewater, was consecrated on Monday week, immediately after the assignment of a district parish, to that portion of the town on the eastern side of the river, was completed on the 13th instant. The demands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were satisfied by the advancement in the meantime of a considerable sum by two gentlemen, Messrs. Poole and Bowen, to whose exertions the subscribers to the endowment fund appear to have been much indebted. This church is the edifice so singularly raised up to the establishment by the munificent liberality and enthusiasm of a total stranger to Bridgewater (Mr. Capes) who, still more singularly, afterwards became a Roman Catholic, and drew away from the establishment he had so disinterestedly supported many of the congregation and the friends he had acquired: while measures were successfully adopted to reserve to the establishment an edifice so liberally founded for its use.——The journeymen painters of Leeds and their employers are again at variance on the subject of wages.——The parishioners of Holy Trinity, Goodramgate, in the heart of York, have very properly determined that in future no interments shall take place in their churchyard—widows, widowers, and those who possess private vaults excepted.——The inhabitants of Hull have at length been consulted on the subject of their proposed new markets. The recommendation of the Queen-street site by Mr. John Peck has been favourably received, and indeed the proposal so far resolved upon. The property in that quarter is said to be much dilapidated, and cheaply purchasable; and Mr. Peck stated that "by estimate he had found that a covered market (including a corn exchange and fish market) could be made for 10,000*l.*, thus (with 20,000*l.* for twenty years' purchase of the property, under deduction of 3,000*l.* for old materials) bringing the cost to about 27,000*l.*——The extensive Sunderland Dock scheme is about to be realized. Contracts for the principal dock are to be called for in the usual way forthwith, and also for the construction of the Sunderland and Penshet branch of the York and Newcastle Railway, which links Sunderland with the great branch line of the York and Newcastle, and which is requisite for the transmission of stone from the Marquis of Londonderry's Penshet quarries to the site of the proposed works.——The cost of the Scott Monument at Edinburgh (the statue for which was inaugurated on Saturday week) is said to have been between 16,000*l.* and 17,000*l.*——A bathing and washing house, under the new Act of Parliament, is to be erected in Belfast, at an estimated cost of 2,500*l.*, with ample provision for further enlargement. It is intended, in the meantime, to provide twenty-one baths—thirteen for men and eight for women, with accommodation for sixty washers.

CHRIST CHURCH, RAMSGATE.—On the 12th inst. the first stone of this proposed church was laid by Mr. J. P. Pluinptree. The style of the church is Early English, with a nave 72 feet long, and side aisles. The church will be 62 feet in breadth; the chancel is 36 feet by 24 feet; the tower, with spire, is at the east end, over the vestry, and will stand from the ground about 124 feet. The cost will be about 5,300*l.*, and number of persons accommodated 950. Mr. G. Scott is the architect, and Mr. W. E. Smith, of Ramsgate, the builder.

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